



#### **NEWS RELEASE**

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Editor's note: The U.S. Department of Education news release has been edited and localized.

## **OMAHA PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND AN OMAHA SCHOOL RECEIVE 2014 NATIONAL GREEN RIBBON AWARDS**

**Award Honors Schools and Districts for Reducing Environmental Impact and Costs; Improving Health; and Offering Environmental Education**

Omaha Public Schools was one of nine districts nationally to receive the Green Ribbon District Sustainability Award. Fontenelle Elementary School in Omaha was one of 48 U.S. schools recognized for their exemplary efforts to reduce environmental impact and utility costs, promote better health, and ensure effective environmental education, including civics and green career pathways.

Acting Chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality Mike Boots joined U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan today to announce the 2014 U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools award honorees.

Duncan and Boots made the announcement at the U.S. Department of Education, in Washington, DC. Secretary Duncan also announced a new post-secondary nomination category will be added to the school and district awards for the coming year.

"Today's honorees are modeling a comprehensive approach to being green by encompassing facility, wellness and learning into their daily operations," said Secretary Duncan. "They are demonstrating ways schools can simultaneously cut costs, improve health, and engage students with hands-on learning that prepares them with the thinking skills necessary to be successful in college and careers."

"Schools all over the country can look to today's honorees as models for creating a healthier learning environment while lowering energy bills and preparing students for success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy," said Acting Chair Mike Boots. "The schools and districts being honored today are taking smart, innovative steps to reduce environmental impacts and teach students the kinds of sustainable practices that they can carry with them into their homes and future careers."

The schools were confirmed from a pool of candidates voluntarily nominated by 30 state education agencies. The list of selectees includes 39 public schools and nine private schools. The public schools include 10 early learning programs, three charter, one magnet and three career and technical schools.

The schools serve various grade levels, including 29 elementary, 16 middle and 18 high schools are among them, with several schools having various K-12 configurations, from 28 states. Twenty-one of the 2014 honorees serve a disadvantaged student body. The list of all selected schools and districts, as well as their nomination packages, can be found [here](#). A report with highlights on the 57 honorees can be found [here](#).

The Department is looking forward to a fourth year of award, with a post-secondary category, and will be posting updated competition criteria shortly to reflect this addition. State education agencies are encouraged to indicate intent to nominate schools in 2015 by August 1, 2014.

More information on the federal recognition award can be found [here](#). Resources for all schools to move toward the three Pillars in which the 2014 honorees are exemplary can be found [here](#).